



## NEWS RELEASE

STATE OF NEBRASKA

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)  
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### President Approves Federal Disaster Declaration for Severe Storms, Tornadoes, Straight-line Winds, Flooding from May 6 to June 17

Lincoln, Neb — Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts received notification Thursday from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) officials that President Barack Obama approved a request for a presidential disaster declaration for parts of Nebraska impacted by severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds and flooding from May 6 to June 17.

The president, through FEMA, issued a public assistance declaration that provides assistance for emergency work and the repair or replacement of disaster-damaged facilities in the following counties: Cass, Dundy, Gage, Jefferson, Lancaster, Lincoln, Morrill, Nuckolls, Otoe, Saline, Saunders, and Thayer. The declaration allows federal emergency funding to be used in providing assistance to state and local governmental agencies and some nonprofit organizations. It also includes federal funding on a cost-sharing basis for hazard mitigation measures for all counties in the state.

"Nebraskans affected by this severe weather and flooding appreciate the approval of FEMA funding for these storms," said Gov. Ricketts. "Federal assistance will help the recovery process following storms that caused millions of dollars in damage in the state."

W. Craig Fugate, FEMA administrator, named Christian M. Van Alstyne as federal coordinating officer for federal recovery operations in the affected area.

FEMA said additional designations may be made at a later date if requested by the state and warranted by the results of further damage assessments.

"These 12 counties are just some of the counties affected by historic rain and flooding this year," said Bryan Tuma, assistant director of Nebraska Emergency Management Agency. "Other counties may be added after additional assessments can be completed."

NEMA's preliminary damage estimates to public infrastructure in the initial 12 counties exceeds \$13.5 million, with the most severe impacts to roads and bridges.

Eligible costs include removal of storm debris, emergency protective measures and repair or replacement of disaster-damaged roads, bridges, public buildings, critical facilities, such as water, sewer and power systems, and other public facilities.

The next step in the process, according to Tuma, involves applicant briefings for the initial 12 counties which will provide information to applicants on how to submit information for projects. Those will be scheduled prior to July 20.

“We have been in contact with FEMA Region VII and developed a timetable for FEMA personnel to arrive in Nebraska and staff a joint field office with NEMA,” Tuma said. “The severe weather throughout the entire region has complicated the process with regards to completing preliminary damage assessments (PDAs). There are a number of counties that sustained damage from May 6 to June 17 where PDAs have not yet been completed. We have instructed county officials to evaluate and document damages as best they can.”

FEMA and NEMA staff will conduct preliminary damage assessments for possible inclusion in the declaration in at least 15 additional counties beginning July 20, Tuma said.

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